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An
Inaugural Dissertation

Presented
March 3^d 1828

on the
Hæmorrhoidal Disease,

for the
Degree of Doctor of Medicine
at the

University of Pennsylvania,
by

Robert Rogers
of

Pennsylvania

January 9th 1828

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A brief outline of the character,
causes, & treatment of the
Hæmorrhoidal disease.

(P. 14)

Hæmorrhoidal Disease.

The hæmorrhoidal disease "consists, in a morbid state of the vessels of the rectum, and anus; attended generally with tumours, with or without a flow of blood; but occasionally, with a flow of blood without tumours.

Although this definition does not include all the phenomena of the disease; yet in my opinion, its most prominent characteristics are therein more briefly exhibited, than in any other which I have seen. —

"This disease is of very frequent occurrence, and may be met with in every climate. It is more frequently found in females than males, especially in those who have borne children; owing, probably, to there being less tone in the vessels of these parts, and to the suppression of the menstrual fluid to which they are subject. Those of sedentary and indolent habits, are also peculiarly liable to its attacks.

It appears frequently, especially in the commencement of the disease, to be merely a topical affection, unconnected with any constitutional disturbance; in these cases, there are no symptoms precursory to the appearance of the tumours, and discharge of blood, which give intimation of the impen-

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The Government of the United States
has the honor to acknowledge the receipt
of your letter of the 10th inst. in relation
to the business of the United States
and in reply to inform you that the
same has been forwarded to the
proper authorities for their consideration.
It is the duty of the Government
to see that the laws are faithfully
executed and that the public interest
is protected. It is also the duty
of the Government to see that the
rights of the people are preserved
and that the public property is
safeguarded. It is the duty of the
Government to see that the public
debt is paid and that the public
credit is maintained. It is the duty
of the Government to see that the
public works are carried out and
that the public health is promoted.
It is the duty of the Government
to see that the public education is
improved and that the public
moral is elevated. It is the duty
of the Government to see that the
public peace is maintained and
that the public order is preserved.
It is the duty of the Government
to see that the public justice is
administered and that the public
safety is secured. It is the duty
of the Government to see that the
public interest is promoted and
that the public good is advanced.
It is the duty of the Government
to see that the public power is
exercised and that the public
will is done. It is the duty of the
Government to see that the public
life is improved and that the public
happiness is increased. It is the duty
of the Government to see that the
public glory is enhanced and that
the public honor is maintained.

ding attack; but in general, some premonitory signs may be observed, such as slight fever, nausea, vomiting, vertigo, stupor, pains in the back, and loins, a peculiar sensation of weight or tension, about the anus, which sometimes extends to the perineum. These symptoms sometimes continue several days, when a discharge of blood takes place, and the tumours make their appearance, which in general speedily puts an end to the preceding symptoms; but sometimes the attacks are frequently repeated before they make their appearance. As the discharge of blood, and the tumours form, by far, the most prominent characteristics of the disease, it will perhaps be necessary for me to attend to them more particularly; and first of the discharge.

Considerable difference of opinion exists, in the minds of Physicians, respecting the true source of this discharge; some contending that it has an arterial, others, a venous origin. Numerous arguments are adduced by each party in favour of its respective opinions to examine all of which would be a useless waste of time, and as I do not consider it a matter of much practical importance, I shall pass by without noticing them. I believe however, a majority are at present in favour of its being a venous discharge. The quantity discharged

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considerably. In the primary attacks it is generally very trifling, and shows itself particularly during the passage of faeces, in the form of streaks on the external surface of the excrement; in these cases it would seem to proceed from the capillary vessels of the mucous coat of the rectum, and frequently without any solution of continuity in the part; it generally increases with each successive attack, and the quantity sometimes voided is truly alarming, in so much that instances are related of persons dying, from the discharge alone. In these cases there is generally considerable inflammation, and the vessels of the part are in a state of proternatural excitement. If, after the phlogosis subsides, the hemorrhage does not cease, or prove immediately fatal, debility necessarily ensues, which eventuates in a general arrangement of the constitutional health. This discharge is, in some few instances, periodical, though it seldom observes with regularity the laws of periodicity; when however, this does take place, it is generally owing to the hemorrhoidal vessels having assumed a vicarious action, in consequence of an obstruction or suppression of the menstrual or some other periodical discharge.

Doubts are also entertained respecting the nature or object of this discharge, and its effects upon the system, some contending for its salutary, others for its injurious tendencies; but a consideration of these opinions will come more appropriately under the head of the treatment. Having now briefly examined, the most important things to be noticed concerning the discharge, we shall next pass to the consideration of its accompanying phenomenon, the tumours. These two accessory phenomena of the hemorrhoidal disease are generally, though not uniformly concomitant symptoms; for, we sometimes observe the appearance of tumours independently of any discharge of blood, and vice versa. These however form by far the most prominent features of the disease.

The precise manner in which these tumours are formed, is still a matter of controversy; whether they are the result of a rupture of some of the hemorrhoidal vessels, and consequent effusion into the cellular membrane surrounding the anus; or merely a varicose distension of the hemorrhoidal veins, is as yet, undetermined. Both opinions would, in certain cases, appear to me to be correct; that the latter opinion is sometimes true, I would infer

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from the following circumstances, namely, the slow and gradual manner in which they sometimes enlarge, and this enlargement never being periodical; their colour being of a dark bluish tinge, resembling varicose veins in other parts of the body; their being soft and elastic to the touch; and from their size being sensibly diminished by pressure, but speedily returning to their former dimensions on the removal of the pressure; and when from absorption or any accidental circumstance the coats of the vein become ruptured, the hemorrhage is much more profuse, than it could be were it the result of effusion. But on the contrary, we sometimes observe them appear suddenly, continue for a short time, and then disappear leaving the skin in a loose, flabby condition; having a brownish or pale red colour; being of a pretty solid & springy feel, and when cut into their texture appears tolerably compact, "from which blood oozes, leaving the texture pale and more relaxed?" When these latter appearances prevail, I think there is reason to believe they are the result of effusion. The number of these tumours varies greatly, sometimes there appears only a tumid ring around the anus, at other times, many distinct

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and prominent swellings may be observed; they are more or less painful accordingly as they are situated near to the sphincter ani muscle, and are compressed by it. The pain is sometimes so severe, that the patient can neither walk, ride, nor sit with any tolerable degree of ease, and the only situation which can, under such circumstances, afford him any respite from his sufferings, being the horizontal, with his limbs widely separated.

The natural warmth of these parts has a tendency to keep up local heat; the sensations of weight, and tension are considerably increased by the obstruction which is presented to a free passage of blood through the hæmorrhoidal veins. The irritation produced by the combined influence of these causes frequently induces spasmodic contractions of the sphincter ani muscle, which give rise to most excruciating pain. These contractions are sometimes so violent as to produce strangulation of the tumour, from which mortification and sloughing result, and in this manner a radical cure is occasionally effected. In some cases where there exists high inflammation, adhesion takes place from the extravasation of coagulable lymph, which becoming organized, forms caruncular excrescences, of various shapes, and sizes, generally soft and ~~and~~ compressible, and ha-

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ering a redish colour. As a temporary result of Hemoids there sometimes occur serous tumours around the anus, resembling much in appearance the sanguineous hemorrhoidal tumour: they may, however, generally be distinguished from true piles, by their being more transparent, very elastic and compressible, and requiring, in many instances, only a few hours for their production. They are mostly met with in persons of a leucophlegmatic habit.

Next, of the causes.

These may be arranged under two general heads, constitutional, and local. Under the former head may be mentioned, intemperance, debauchery, sedentary habits, hereditary predisposition, &c. Under the latter head may be enumerated, costiveness, excessive exercise on horseback, congestions of the liver, and in short, whatever has a tendency to retard, or prevent a free passage of blood through the hemorrhoidal vessels. The situation and structure of the hemorrhoidal veins, would, in a particular manner, appear to favour the production of this complaint; for, independently of the circumstance of their being destitute of valves, the blood in them has to ascend contrary to its own gravity; and besides, they are denied the assistance of

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muscular action of surrounding parts, which assists materially in carrying on venous circulation in almost every other part of the body: any obstacle therefore, which is presented to a free passage of blood through these vessels, will operate more forcibly.

The frequent use of certain medicinal agents, such as aloe, colocynthis, rhubarb, stimulating glysters and suppositories &c. have also the effect of producing this disease, these however operate rather by producing an irritation in the lower part of the intestinum rectum, and thereby inviting an afflux of blood to the part, producing congestion, and finally the haemorrhoidal disease, with all its accompanying phenomena. The depressing passions, strong mental emotions of a melancholy nature, anger, fear &c. are said also to produce this affection. These causes are said by Monteggia, a distinguished writer on this subject, to operate by producing a remarkable impulsion on the coeliac plexus situated in the abdomen, and in immediate sympathetic communication with the liver, biliary ducts, and rectum. This impulsion says he, "is most felt at the epigastrium by a sense of uneasiness, load and kind of constriction there, producing derangement in digestion, biliary secretion, gastric irritability &c. the effect of these melancholy emotions is to unbalance the balance of their =

The first of these is the fact that the
 human mind is not a blank slate at birth.
 It is a complex of ideas and feelings
 which are inherited from our ancestors.
 These ideas and feelings are the result
 of the environment in which we live.
 The second fact is that the human mind
 is not a passive receiver of information.
 It is an active participant in the process
 of learning. It selects what it wants to
 learn and it interprets what it learns.
 The third fact is that the human mind
 is not a single entity. It is a collection
 of many different parts, each of which
 has its own function. These parts are
 the senses, the memory, the imagination,
 the emotions, and the intellect. Each of
 these parts is connected to the others, and
 they all work together to form the human
 mind.

ulation and give origin to internal concentrations of blood.

The cutaneous vessels become almost exanguineous, and it is under such circumstances that we see rupture of the parietes ^{of the} heart, or fatal congestions in some of the other viscera. Here an explosion of the hæmorrhoidal flux often wards off the impending danger.

Concerning the diagnosis, and prognosis of this disease nothing need be said. By an attentive observer, there is no disease with which it can be easily confounded. And very seldom is it necessarily fatal; although it may be consecutively so by inducing diseases much more pernicious to the constitution. —

Having now briefly considered the general character of the disease, and the causes by which it may be produced we shall next pass to the more important part of our subject, the

Treatment.

And here in the very outset, we are met by the important question, is it proper for us to interfere, or endeavour to check this disease? It was contended by some of the ancients, particularly the celebrated Stahl and his followers, and indeed by some writers of more modern date, that this cannot be done consistently with the health of the system; but this

The first of these is the fact that the
 number of the population of the United States
 has increased from 3,929,214 in 1790 to 31,443,321
 in 1880. This increase has been the result of
 the immigration of large numbers of foreign
 born people into the country. The second fact
 is that the number of the population of the
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 1790 to 31,443,321 in 1880. This increase
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opinion is now pretty generally exploded, and considered incorrect, except in certain cases where it appears as a vicarious discharge, or is dependent on some constitutional affection; in these instances, our attention must first be directed to the cause, and if it be owing to the suppression of some other discharge, we must endeavour to restore this, and then we may with all safety cure the hemorrhoidal disease.

Except in the particular cases above mentioned, it would be the height of impropriety to permit so troublesome a complaint to continue its ravages upon the system, until it has impaired the constitutional health, and induced diseases more destructive than itself.

The first object which claims our attention, in the treatment of the hemorrhoidal disease, is the hemorrhage.

The means by which this is to be suppressed, may be either general, or local. When the hemorrhage is considerable, the patient should be laid in a cool room, kept in a recumbent posture, with his hips elevated, and cold acidulated drinks freely administered. With a view to produce a determination of blood to some other quarter, as well as diminish the phlogistic diathesis of the system,

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The first thing I noticed when I stepped out
of the house was the cold. It was a sharp
contrast to the warmth of the room. I shivered
as I walked down the path. The trees were
bare, their branches reaching out like skeletal
hands. The ground was covered in a thin layer
of frost. I could see my breath in the air.
The silence was absolute. No birds, no insects,
no wind. It was a strange, eerie feeling.
I walked on, my feet crunching on the frost.
The path led to a small clearing. In the center
was a large, old tree. Its trunk was thick
and gnarled. The branches were twisted and
bent. I stood under its shade, feeling a sense
of peace. The sun was low in the sky, casting
a long, golden glow. The air was still and
warm. I closed my eyes and breathed in the
fresh air. It was a moment of pure bliss.
I opened my eyes and looked at the tree.
It seemed to be watching me. I felt a
strange connection. I walked closer, my
hand reaching out to touch its bark. The
texture was rough and scaly. I pulled my
hand back, feeling a small sting. I looked
up at the branches, which were bare and
twisted. I felt a sense of awe. The tree
was so old, so wise. It had seen so much.
I stood there for a long time, feeling
small and insignificant. The sun had set,
and the moon was rising. The sky was
dark and starry. I felt a sense of wonder.
The world was so big, so vast. I was just
a small part of it. I walked back to the
house, feeling a sense of peace and calm.
The night was quiet and still. I went to
bed, feeling a sense of contentment. The
world was so beautiful, so full of life. I
was grateful for everything. I was alive.
I was here. I was now.

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(if there be any present,) we may resort to venesection; but unless the hemorrhage be profuse, and the system plethoric, it will not be necessary; with the same view cupping glasses may be applied to some remote part of the body. Styptic, and astringent injections, such as decoction of oak, or persimmon bark, should be freely administered. As a local application, the pulp of the persimmon will be found very serviceable. Should these means fail, however, in checking the hemorrhage, we must next resort to compression; this may be effected by means of a sponge tent introduced within the rectum. As a last resource, the actual cautery has, by some, been recommended; but this will scarcely ever be necessary, as we can generally succeed by more lenient measures.

The next object requiring attention is, the tumour. If there be attended by inflammation, the first thing to be enjoined, is, absolute rest in a horizontal position, with the limbs wisely separated, and the hips elevated. If there be any sympathetic fever, it will perhaps be necessary to detract a little blood from the general system, by venesection. The swelling and pain may also be considerably

alleviated by taking away a few ounces of blood from the neighbourhood of the anus by means of cups, or leeches, particularly the former.

A quiet and relaxed state of the bowels is an object which we should generally endeavour to obtain in the treatment of this painful affection; but in the commencement of this disease, while the inflammation is high, it would perhaps be prudent to delay the exhibition of purgatives for a short time, as the passage of a stool, particularly, if it contains hardnesses, will give rise to most violent pain; but as soon as a discharge of some gentle aperient medicine should be used, such as castor oil, emmet tartar and sulphur &c. The painful spasms which I before alluded to, may be relieved by warm anodyne fomentations, and gentle and continued pressure on the tumid portion. Balsam copiba, or spirit of turpentine may be given in doses of twenty, thirty, or forty drops three times per day. These will generally have the effect of allaying irritation, and pain, as well as regulating the bowels. Stomachs, indeed are the local applications, which have been recommended for these painful

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swellings, to enumerate all of which, would be altogether
negatory. I shall therefore only mention some of those which
would appear to be most important. —

Cataplasms, or poultices of bread and milk, or flaxseed,
moistened with rose water, and sandal wood, form very
grateful applications, and prove serviceable in reducing
the inflammation. An ointment composed of hog's lard,
sperma ceti, gamboge extract, and laudanum, is recom-
mended by Professor Chapman, as an excellent application
to haemorrhoidal tumours in the inflammatory stage.

Cold applications are also very beneficial by attracting
heat from the part and thus abating inflammatory action.
Enemas, or suppositories of opium with a little mucilage
or starch are very effectual in allaying irritation.
Injections of cold water are also very highly recommended.

Having, by the means above detailed, succeeded in
subduing the inflammatory condition of these tumours, we
may next resort to more stimulating measures. —

As an internal remedy, Ward's paste in dose of the
size of a nutmeg several times p. day is very important.

Bubels, also will be found to effect a very satisfactory

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influence, in this stage, of the disease.

Of the local remedies in this stage of the disease, the unguentum gallanum, generally ranks highest. In the practice of my preceptor, however, an ointment composed of equal parts of unguentum gallanum, and unguentum hydragori has succeeded more effectually, than any other application. It may also be employed at an earlier stage of the disease than the unguentum gallanum alone. For ointments, and tea water are also very excellent applications in the atonic state of hamorrhoidal tumours.

Compression also may here, be very advantageously employed, which if the tumours be external, may be effected by compresses, and a T bandage; but if internal, by a wax candle, or piece of hard tallow. The tumours should in all cases, if practicable be returned within the rectum, and may be done by anointing the finger with oil, and gently pressing them up.

Though horse exercise when excessive, is a frequent cause of this disease, yet when moderately used, it proves a very important remedial agent; but this is altogether

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inadmissible, except in the atonic stage.

Notwithstanding all our efforts, it frequently happens that we cannot, by our remedies, effect a permanent cure, all we can do being merely to palliate the more violent symptoms as they occur, and thus afford a temporary relief. — The physician, therefore, having exhausted all his resources in vain, the case must then devolve into the hands of the surgeons, from whom alone, in such cases, are we to expect a radical cure. This is to be effected by entirely removing the whole, or at least a considerable part of the tumour. For effecting this purpose two methods are in common use, the knife, and ligature. The latter is, at present, much preferred, at least in this country.

To the ingenuity, and skill of Professor Physick are we indebted for the discovery of the most convenient method of using the ligature. A description of this instrument, and the manner of applying it, in this place, altogether unnecessary, as it is particularly described in most of our modern works on surgery. — It is proper to apply it to but one tumour

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at a time, selecting the most prominent and painful; after it drops off, the part should be bathed with some soothing lotion, and a cold poultice applied, to promote the healing of the ulcer. Then the instrument may be again and again applied, until a sufficient quantity be removed. The method of using the ligature proposed by M^r. Roussseau of Philadelphia, would appear, in certain cases, to answer very well; as where there are no prominent and distinct tumours; but merely a tumid ring around the anus; and where caruncular excrescences have formed; for, in these cases, it is difficult to apply a single ligature. The actual cautery, and caustics were at one time much used for the purpose of removing hæmorrhoidal tumours, but they are now, I think, very justly abandoned.

(Finis)

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The first thing I noticed when I stepped
 out of the car was the cold. It was a
 sharp contrast to the warm blanket of
 the car. I shivered slightly, but then
 I remembered that this was the first
 day of the new year. I took a deep
 breath and felt a sense of renewal.
 The air was crisp and clean, and the
 sun was shining brightly. I felt like
 I was starting a new chapter in my
 life. I looked up at the sky and
 saw a few birds flying. I smiled and
 felt a sense of peace.

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